

REMARKS

Applicants submit that by the present Amendment and Remarks, this application is placed in clear condition for immediate allowance. Specifically, the claims indicated allowable have essentially been placed in independent form and the only remaining claims depend therefrom. Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment and Remarks, and favorable consideration, are respectfully solicited pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Claims 15, 16, 21, 24 and 25 are pending in this application. Claims 12, 13, 22 and 23 have been deleted. Claims 16 and 25 have essentially been placed in independent form, noting that an unnecessary limitation was deleted. The dependency of claims 15 and 21 was changed to claim 16. Applicants submit that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue or any new issue for that matter.

In the Office Action dated February 3, 2003, the following rejections were imposed:

1. Claim 12 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 for lack of novelty as evidenced by Takaishi;
2. Claims 13 and 21 through 23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 for obviousness predicated upon Takaishi in view of Wang et al.;
3. Claim 24 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 for obviousness predicated upon Takaishi in view of Wang et al. and the acknowledged prior art;
4. Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 for obviousness predicated upon Takaishi in view of Gonzalez et al.

Each of the above rejection is traversed. Indeed, each of the above rejections has been rendered moot by essentially placing claims 16 and 25, indicated allowable, in independent form, with remaining claims 15, 21 and 24 depending ultimately from claim 16. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102 and 35 U.S.C. §103 imposed in the February 23, 2003 Office Action is solicited.

Summary

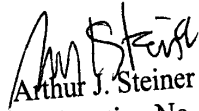
Claims 16 and 25, indicated allowable, have been essentially placed in independent form with the remaining claims dependent therefrom. Applicants, submit that all pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance. Favorable consideration is, therefore, respectfully solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

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Respectfully submitted,

MCDERMOTT, WILL & EMERY


Arthur J. Steiner

Registration No. 26,106

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
(202) 756-8000 AJS:ntb
Facsimile: (202) 756-8087
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